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LOYOLA OPENS COLLEGE BASKETBALL AND HOCKEY SEASONS

The Loyola College Warriors will open the college basketball and hockey seasons Friday night when both clubs will hold their annual inter-squad games.

Doug Daigneault's cagers will take to the basketball court in the Loyola physical education complex at 6:30 p.m. while the hockey Warriors coached by Dave Draper will be put through their paces to earn berths on the Varsity squad at 8:30 p.m.

"I'm putting a lot of emphasis on the inter-squad game," said Draper. "There are a lot of boys very close together in ability and a lot of the returning veterans still have to earn their berths on the squad".

"A good showing in the game and the boys will make the team. We can only carry 16 players and two goalies and right now there are 30 and four goalies still in the running for positions on the senior squad."

The hockey Warriors lost seven key players from the team that swept to the Ottawa-St. Lawrence league regular season title and took the Coupe de Quebec with relative ease before being upset in the playoffs by Sir George. Gone are goalies Brian Hughes and Andy Molino and forwards Art Thomas, Pete Morin, Bernie Austin and Bob Jastremski. But the entire defensive corps is back.

Draper said that he expects his defence, led by 17 year-old Larry Carriere and Bill Doyle, to be one of his squad's strongest points. But back on the forward line are Mike Lowe, fresh from the National Hockey League St. Louis Blues training camp, and captain Chris Hayes --"pretty fair hockey players", as coach Draper described them.

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One of the few players to have made the varsity squad is freshman Jack Surbey. Surbey played for St. Thomas High School and has made the big jump to the first line college hockey ranks without any seasoning on a junior varsity squad.

"I was quite surprised to see Surbey make it," admitted Draper. "College hockey has progressed so far in the last few years that I didn't think it possible for a boy fresh out of high school to make a strong team like ours. Very few boys have been able to accomplish this in Canada."

As soon as they're finished with the inter-squad game the ice Warriors start to work on the first part of one of the most competitive intercollegiate schedules in the country. On Friday, November 1, the Warriors leave on a three game road trip into the Maritimes to prepare for their home opener vs. Toronto, where they play Acadia, St. Francis Xavier and then take on a Junior team from Sydney on Cape Breton Island. Then its back to meet the Varsity Blues, the defending national champions on Saturday, November 8th at the complex. Loyola's first league game is on November 11.

"We have a great schedule," said Draper, "The competition will help us. It's been a long summer. We're anxious to get started."

"It's going to be a challenging year", was the cager's coach, Doug Daigneault's analysis of the coming year. "We have boys who want to play ball this year. They've got the pride, the spirit and the ability to make it a good year."

Nineteen players are still out fighting for the 12 positions open on the Varsity cage squad. For the last few weeks during informal and then regular practices the Warriors have been busy getting themselves into top physical shape and now they head into their first real serious test of the year - the maroon and white inter-squad game tomorrow at 6:30 p.m.

None of the boys have made the team yet," said Daigneault. "All of the spots on the Varsity team are open, but, of course we'll be giving the returning veterans the first consideration. They've looked pretty good so far."

The Warriors will put the same lineup, minus two faces, on to the court that carried them to a sweep of the Ottawa-St. Lawrence laurels and third place in the national basketball championships in Waterloo last spring. The two missing faces are Peter Phipps, gone to Acadia and backup pivot Ken Hoffman, who suffered a severe truck accident this summer.

Daigneault is looking for Tom Profenno to take over the court leadership from one of the starting guard positions and John "the Bull" McAuliffe is back under the boards sweeping in the rebounds. Earl Lewis, Jim Ivy and Jack Contos are healthy and raring to go.

Waiting for the slightest opportunity to take over a spot on the Varsity squad are such promising rookies as Jim McCarthy, Greg Gill, both forwards, and guard Jim Fahey, who had an outstanding year on the Junior Varsity team last year.

"It's hard to say who will be the heart of the team," admitted the coach. "Last year although we averaged 90 points, our top scorer only got 18 points a game. We were a good balanced club, but this year I know we'll have even more balance and we'll be able to play more people."

More balance means nothing but trouble for Loyola's conference opponents, but it will stand the Warriors in good stead for their tough non-conference schedule. This year in the first half of the season the Warriors will open against the western powerhouse ~~the~~ Manitoba ~~then~~ when they head east for Acadia's tip-off tournament to face the host university and New Haven College. Also on the schedule are teams like Carleton, McGill, Oswego State, Adelphi College of New York City, C.W. Post and then they will host their own Centennial Tournament.

Daigneault described the pre-season camp as the best he's ever had. In the four years he's been at Loyola, Daigneault has compiled a record of 63-33. Last year the Warriors stormed to a 24-9 season and will place their string of 26 consecutive league wins on the line when they open their league schedule against Sir George Williams on November 18.

"We'll be in good shape when we open our regular season, if we can keep free of any serious injuries," the coach said. We want to get back to the Nationals and take it all this year".

"The inter-squad game will determine just who really wants to play ball for us. The rookies can still beat out the veterans."

"In three weeks we should have a basketball team," Daigneault admitted in a burst of understatement. "It should be a good year."